



Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Policy Reference:	PL 1-F
Responsibility:	Curriculum and Standards Committee
Designation:	Statutory (Diocese)
Reviewed by:	Leigh Emanuel and Alison Tong
This Review:	April 2025
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Cycle:	Annual
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Signed:	G Owens
Gerard Owens	Chair of Governors

At our school, with Jesus in our hearts, we have:

***The passion to learn;
The courage to fail; The strength to love.***

With Christ as our guide and example we celebrate the uniqueness of the individual.

***Together we will try to:
Learn from Jesus;
Love like Jesus;
Live like Jesus.***

Introduction

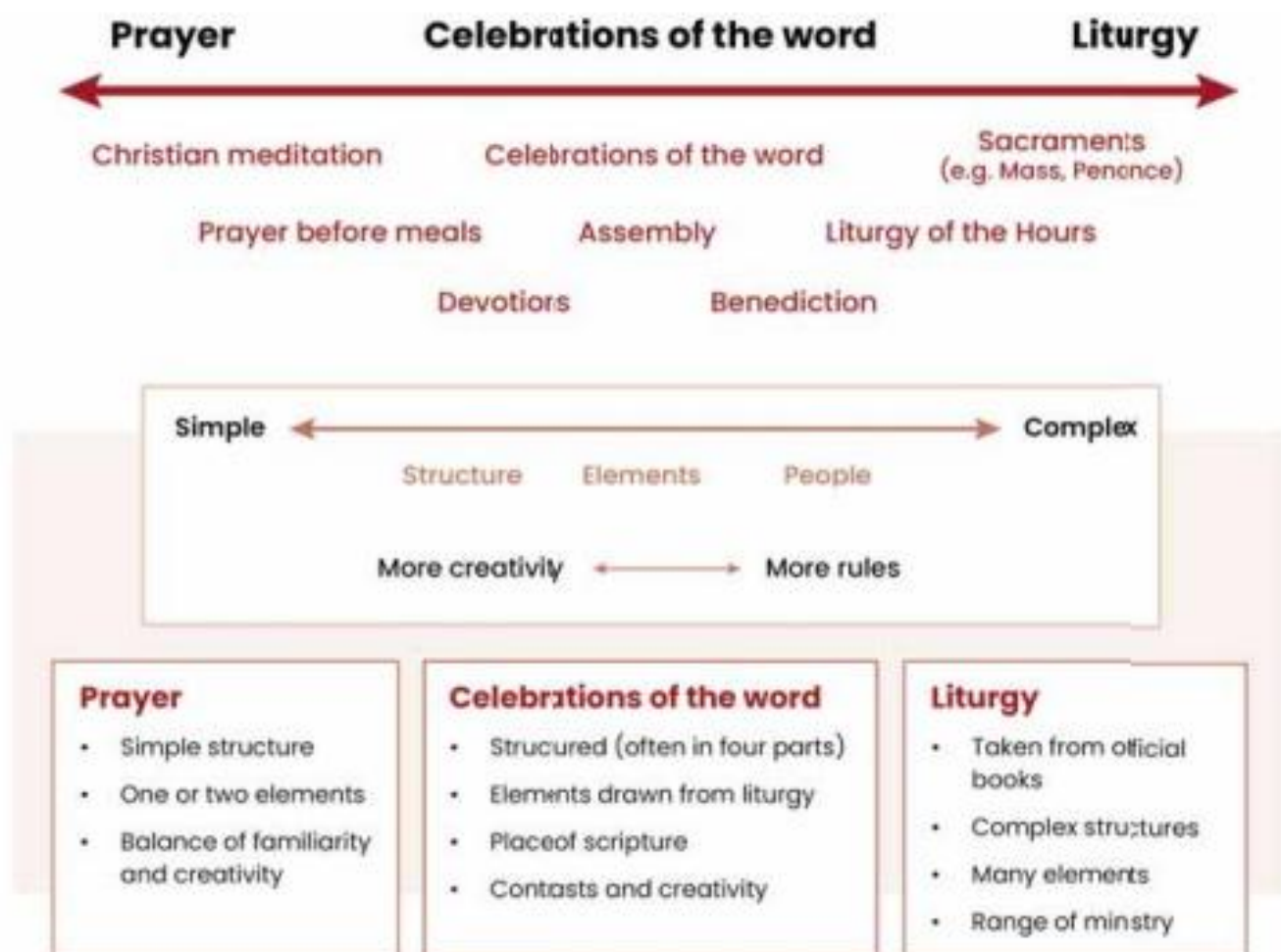
The prayer and liturgy policy in the federation of St Bernadette's and St Patrick's supports the mission statements and charism values of both schools.

As a Catholic school, we recognise the need to ensure that prayer and liturgy are intrinsic to the daily rhythm and life of the school and that all members of the school community are to be supported in their spiritual journey, through the related experiences that we offer.

In light of our Catholic nature, our school will plan and deliver a range of prayer and liturgy experiences including: classroom prayer, meditation, assemblies, devotions, special services for times in the school year, celebrations of Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Each form of prayer and liturgy will have its own character dependent on the circumstances, size and age of the group, the place of celebration and its content.

(From the Prayer and Liturgy Directory: [To Love You More Dearly](#), 2023)

Definition of Terms Prayer, Celebration of the Word and Liturgy form a continuum with silent meditation at one end and a celebration of Mass on a Solemnity of the Church (e.g., Ascension of the Lord) at the other. Of course, there are areas of overlap between the categories:



The context of this prayer and liturgy policy

Prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school name and celebrates God's presence in our lives. They are concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is our loving response, in a word and action, to God's invitation to enter into a relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer and Liturgy are central to our Catholic ethos. They provide an opportunity for all to reflect on God's word and to celebrate and respond to the beliefs and attitudes, which characterise Christian life. We strive to provide a rich variety of prayerful experiences, which will deepen the pupil's sense of belonging to the faith community of our school and to the wider Church.

As a Catholic community, we provide a unique opportunity to present, in an authentic way, our tradition of Catholic prayer and liturgy while at the same time providing a welcoming environment for all pupils and staff.

Where appropriate, children take an active role in planning, leading and evaluating Prayer and Liturgy. We believe worship remembers and celebrates God's work in our lives. It celebrates His presence amongst us today and allows children and staff the opportunity to be joined with Him.

Aims

- Enable the spiritual development of each member of our community.
- Help children become familiar with the traditional forms of celebration of the word and Liturgy in the Catholic Church and to reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition.
- Provide opportunities to develop a relationship with God.
- Experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit.
- Facilitate a growth in knowledge of the person and teachings of Jesus.
- Build on the experience of belonging to a faith community and complement the work of the parish.
- Enable children to become familiar with religious language, symbols, and different styles of worship and prayer.

Objectives

- Enable our pupils to participate in the rites and prayers of the Mass.
- Provide opportunities that offer a variety of experiences of personal prayer and celebration of the word.
- Provide pupils with the experience of praying prayers used by the Catholic Church.
- Explore and reflect upon the values which underpin our beliefs and actions.
- Enable the pupils to reflect on scripture within liturgy and celebration of the word.
- Reflect the Church's liturgical year within the school's different forms of worship.
- Through experience, to deepen understanding of signs and symbols that express our beliefs.
- Develop communion between the school and parish communities, together strengthening their connection with God
- Encourage and maintain close links with the parishes from which members of our school community come.

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy

We endorse the belief that Prayer and Liturgy take into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it (including adults as well as children):

- Practising Catholics and those who are already very familiar with prayer and liturgy
- within the context of the Catholic Church
- Those for whom the school facilitates their first and only experience of prayer and liturgy
- Those from other Christian traditions – or none

- Those from other faith backgrounds.

We will make reference to the Prayer and Liturgy Directory (Section 5) when planning prayer and liturgy, in order to ensure that participants from the above groups are supported to participate appropriately and in a way in which they feel comfortable.

Celebration of the word and prayer in practice

There must be daily acts of worship for all pupils. This will include, but is not limited to, acts of celebration of the word, prayers at the beginning and end of the day, grace.

Monday- Whole school celebration of the word reflecting on the Gospel from Sunday

Tuesday- phase celebration of the word

Wednesday- class or celebration of the word

Thursday- class or celebration of the word

Friday- Whole school celebration of the word. The opportunity to celebrate those who have lived out the charism values and the mission statement

Other acts of worship throughout the year will include;

- School Masses, including Holy days of Obligation and feast days specific to the two schools
- Penitential Services during Advent and Lent
- Sacrament of reconciliation during Advent and Lent
- Participation in parish Mass
- Masses to mark other important occasions across the schools such as to mark the beginning and end of the year and to mark patronal feast days.

Parents are encouraged and invited to participate in Mass and celebration of the word throughout the year. Both schools support the parish sacramental programmes of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion for the relevant feeder parish, Our Lady & St Dominic and Our Lady Help of Christians.

Parish and school initiatives are encouraged through reciprocal advertisements and contact is made with the Parish Priests or relevant Parish Pastoral Council to help maintain this continuity.

Classroom focal points - Each classroom has its own religious focal points; a prayer table that is covered with a cloth in the colour of the liturgical season. Prayer tables must not be cluttered, but appropriate artefacts that aid prayer and reflection may be placed there.

Planning, Content and Delivery

All acts of worship should:

- Give glory and praise to God
- Be structured to ensure a quality experience for all participants
- Be kept to the point
- Be clear in its liturgical focus and varied in its delivery

It should develop the skills of:

- Reverence
- Contemplation/silence
- Reflection
- Meditation
- Making connections/empathy

Key elements which should guide liturgical preparation:

- Scripture readings.
- Season of the liturgical year/feast.
- Nature of the ritual.
- Flexibility for particular events or to respond to changing situations within the school and wider community.

In most instances, a structure of gather, listen, respond and going forth will be used. As appropriate to the age and stage of the pupils, their skills in preparing, organising and leading prayer and celebration of the word will be developed.

Monitoring and evaluation

- The Prayer and Liturgy Leader will regularly evaluate and review provision, progression, and pupils' participation. This information will be used to identify areas for development and to structure Continuous Professional Development provision.
- Pupils' self-evaluation and reflection of their planning and delivery of Celebration of the word. This will be supported by the RE Leader and class teachers.
- The self-review of Prayer and Liturgy will be shared with governors through the Curriculum and Standards committee.

Staff Training and Formation

All members of the federation community are encouraged to develop their own confidence and expertise through in-service training. Training needs will be identified and coordinated by the Prayer and Liturgy Leader in conjunction with the Headteacher.

Legal requirements

It is a legal requirement that there is a daily 'act of worship' offered for all pupils. This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single 'act of worship' for all pupils, or separate 'acts of worship' in school groups. Holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement.

Prayer, liturgical prayer and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between will always be made clear. The 'act of worship' is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from 'Collective Worship'. However, given the importance of prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents will be made aware of the fact that it can never be confined to 'timetabled slots' but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured, within the RE curriculum.

It is the overall responsibilities of governors, in consultation with the Headteachers, to ensure that the legal requirements are met and opportunities for collective worship are being delivered.